

AMENDED CLAIMS

1.(Currently Amended) A method of thawing meat frozen in meat blocks, comprising providing an apparatus for initial separation of the meat block before the meat block is placed in a rotating container, ~~e-h-a-r-a-c-t-e-r-i-z-e-d-i-n-t-h-a-t~~ applying pressure is ~~applied~~ to the meat block (1) before the meat block it is treated in the rotating container (7), ~~said pressure for~~ initiating a separation process of the meat block (1) into individual pieces (2).

2.(Currently Amended) The A method according to claim 1, ~~e-h-a-r-a-c-t-e-r-i-z-e-d-i-n-t-h-a-t~~ wherein the pressure is applied over ~~the~~ diagonals of the meat block (1).

3.(Currently Amended) The A method according to claim 1 ~~or 2, e-h-a-r-a-c-t-e-r-i-z-e-d-i-n-t-h-a-t~~ further comprising removing a package is removed from the meat block before the meat block (1) is placed in the rotating container (7).

4.(Currently Amended) An apparatus for performing the method, ~~e-h-a-r-a-c-t-e-r-i-z-e-d-i-n-t-h-a-t~~ comprises comprising a number of pistons (3, 4, 5, 6) which either cooperate in pairs or cooperate with a firm opposite face for applying pressure to the meat block (1).

5.(Currently Amended) The An apparatus according to claim 4, ~~e-h-a-r-a-c-t-e-r-i-z-e-d-i-n-t-h-a-t~~ the faces of wherein the pistons (3, 4, 5, 6) have planar faces facing toward the meat block (1) are plane.

6.(Currently Amended) The An apparatus according to claim 4, ~~e-h-a-r-a-c-t-e-r-i-z-e-d-i-n-t-h-a-t~~ the faces of wherein the pistons (3, 4, 5, 6) have faces having elevations or depressions facing toward the meat block (1) ~~comprise elevations or depressions~~.

7.(Currently Amended) The An apparatus according to claim 4, ~~e-h-a-r-a-c-t-e-r-i-z-e-d-i-n-t-h-a-t~~ the faces of wherein the pistons (3, 4, 5, 6) have an outwardly inclined elevation in at least one corner facing toward the meat block (1) ~~are provided with an outwardly inclined elevation in at least one corner~~.

8.(Currently Amended) ~~The~~ An apparatus according to claim 4, ~~characterized in that the faces of wherein~~ the pistons (3, 4, 5, 6) have depressions to receive corners of the meat block (1) facing toward the meat block (1) ~~are provided with depressions to receive the corners of the meat block (1).~~

9.(Currently Amended) ~~The~~ An apparatus according to claim 4 ~~or 8, characterized in that~~ wherein the pistons (3, 4, 5, 6) are positioned ~~such that they apply a~~ for applying the pressure to the meat block (1) over ~~the~~ a diagonal or diagonals of the meat block (1).

10.(Currently Amended) ~~The~~ An apparatus according to ~~claims 4—9, characterized in that it comprises~~ claim 4 further comprising means for detecting and/or removing pieces of metal.